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Comprehensive Public Safety Package Passes Maryland Legislature

April 4th, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today applauded final passage of SB 281- The Firearm Safety Act of 2013. The legislation, sponsored by the Administration, is a comprehensive approach to addressing gun safety and violence prevention in Maryland.

"With today's vote, Maryland has chosen to enact a comprehensive, common sense approach to licensing and gun safety, a ban on the sale of military-style assault weapons and high capacity magazines, and meaningful improvements to mental health treatment and data-sharing – striking a balance between protecting the safety of law enforcement and our children, and respecting the traditions of hunters and law-abiding citizens to purchase handguns for self-protection," **said Governor O'Malley**. "We appreciate the hard work of Senate President Miller, Speaker Busch, floor leaders Senator Brian Frosh and Delegate Kathleen Dumais, and members of the General Assembly. Together, with a strong coalition of advocates, and the people of Maryland who overwhelmingly support policies to reduce gun violence, we've chosen to take action by advancing the strategies that work to save lives."

Lt. Governor Brown led the Administration's community outreach efforts on the Firearm Safety Act. In addition to testifying in support of the proposal alongside the Governor, he held several public town halls around the State where he engaged hundreds of Maryland residents on the need to improve the safety of our communities, strengthen mental health and protect our schools.

"As leaders, we have a responsibility to keep Maryland safe; to prevent senseless violence from threatening our collective potential – violence that takes our children from us too soon and destroys our neighborhoods," **said Lt. Governor Brown**. "The Firearm Safety Act of 2013 is an essential tool in that effort, and makes Maryland a safer place to live, work, and raise a family. Today, with the General Assembly, we took an important step towards making our schools safer and reducing gun violence throughout our state. I want to thank the General Assembly for taking action on this critical legislation, as well as the advocates and community members whose hard work made the passage of this bill possible."

Gun Safety

The legislation includes a ban on assault weapons; a limit on the capacity of a magazine from 20 to 10 rounds; fingerprint licensing requirements on future handgun purchases; and restrictions on possession of firearms and ammunition by persons prohibited by prior criminal offenses and mental health disqualifications.

"From a law enforcement perspective, we know that common sense reforms like requiring licenses to purchase handguns work," **said Jim Johnson, Chief of the Baltimore County Police Department, and Chair of the National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence**. "I applaud Governor O'Malley and the General Assembly for taking these important steps to make Maryland's families safer."

“Governor O’Malley has a history of driving down violent crime by focusing on strategies that work,” **said Prince George’s County State’s Attorney Angela Alsobrooks**. “I commend the Governor and the General Assembly for focusing on common sense initiatives that will make our families, our neighborhoods, and our communities safer.”

Mental Health

The legislation passed today provides a comprehensive approach to safeguarding mental health and making improvements to services to ensure that individuals are not deterred from seeking treatment, but those identified as dangerous are prohibited from possessing firearms. The plan includes information sharing among federal and state partners for background checks, improving mental health services in Maryland, and establishing a Department of Health and Mental Hygiene-led Task Force to Improve Continuity of Care for Individuals in the Community Mental Health System.

FACT SHEET: Taking a Comprehensive Approach to Reducing Gun Violence

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Statement from Governor Martin O'Malley on Voting Expansion Bill Passage

April 8th, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today applauded final passage of SB 279, the Administration's voting expansion bill:

"Every citizen deserves the opportunity to cast their vote and be heard. In 2010, Maryland allowed early voting for the first time. Since then, we've seen a large increase – more than 16 percent of registered Maryland voters in 2012 – in the number of citizens taking advantage of the opportunity to vote early. Thanks to Senator Dyson, Delegate Cardin, Delegate Reznik, and all of the members of the General Assembly who believe that every Marylander should have the right to cast their vote, we've successfully expanded this process in our State.

"Together, we can continue to improve access to voting and encourage more Marylanders to exercise their most fundamental right."

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Governor O'Malley, Senate President Miller, House Speaker Busch Sign Legislation Focused on Jobs and Opportunity

April 9th, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley, Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr, House Speaker Michael E. Busch, joined by Lieutenant Governor Anthony G. Brown, today signed important legislation that will create jobs and expand opportunity for more Marylanders. Among the bills signed into law today are the Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act of 2013, the Employment Advancement Right Now (Earn) initiative, the Public-Private Partnerships bill, and an expansion of the Biotechnology, Research & Development, and Film Production Tax Credits – all of which work to advance job creation, spur innovation, and expand opportunities for Marylanders to compete in a changing 21st century economy.

The O'Malley-Brown Administration set a goal to recover every job lost during the Bush recession by the end of 2014. To date, Maryland has recovered nearly 95 percent of those jobs. Over the last 12 months, the state has now created 38,200 new jobs with the private sector leading the way – creating 95 percent of those new jobs. Today, Maryland's unemployment rate, while still too high, has been driven down to its lowest level in four years – 6.6 percent – 14 percent below the national rate.

"There is no progress without a job. Maryland has now recovered nearly 95 percent of the jobs lost during the Bush recession, but there are still too many moms and dads out of work. Thanks to the hard work of Senate President Miller, House Speaker Busch and our leaders in the General Assembly, together, we have passed meaningful legislation that focuses on creating jobs and expanding opportunity with a balanced, fiscally responsible approach," **said Governor O'Malley**. "Because of the better choices we've made, we've been able to deliver better results this session to expand the ranks of an increasingly diverse and upwardly mobile middle class."

"The most important thing we did this session was to create a legacy for the future of our State that will ensure that Maryland continues to have the best educational system in the country and the transportation infrastructure to support a thriving knowledge-based economy," **said Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.**

"This session, much of the unsung legislation passed was focused on stimulating private sector job creation in Maryland," **said Speaker Michael E. Busch**. "Funding for TEDCO's Rural Business Initiative and a new innovation portal for the State, as well as expanding Public-Private Partnerships, tax credits and tax increment financing options will help give the business community the continued confidence to invest in Maryland's economy."

The Governor and presiding officers signed into law the Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act of 2013, which creates a mechanism to incentivize the development of a 200 MW offshore wind facility that will support almost 850 manufacturing and construction jobs for five years and an additional 160 ongoing supply and Operations & Maintenance (O&M) jobs thereafter.

Championed by Lt. Governor Brown, the Administration's public-private partnership (P3) bill creates an enhanced framework for future P3s that will attract private investment to help build new infrastructure in Maryland with the potential to support thousands of jobs in the future.

"As a result of this legislation we're going to create thousands of jobs for Maryland's workers, address some of our most pressing infrastructure needs, and continue to strengthen and support our state's businesses," **said Lt. Governor Brown**. "Public-private partnerships are going to be an essential part of building a growing 21st Century Maryland economy, and this legislation allows us to approach these partnerships in a more transparent, predictable and efficient way."

A joint effort with Senate President Miller and House Speaker Busch, Governor O'Malley's FY 2014 budget includes a \$4.5 million strategic investment to create the EARN initiative, a competitive grant process that creates employer-driven collaborations to bridge the gap between specific employer workforce needs and the skills of Maryland's workers to identify common workforce needs for high-demand occupations within a target industry such as construction, traditional and advanced manufacturing, cyber security, and health care; and develop and implement education or training strategies to address those shortages.

The Governor and presiding officers also signed an expansion of three existing tax credits: the Research and Development Tax Credit by 25 percent to \$8 million to spur additional investment in Maryland companies; the Biotechnology Tax Credit by \$2 million to \$10 million to encourage investment in Maryland's biotechnology industry; and the Film Production Tax Credit to increase investment in Maryland's film industry. The FY 2014 budget also includes the creation of a new \$3 million Cyber Tax Credit to advance Maryland's rapidly growing cyber sector.

Since taking office, the Administration has cut more spending than any administration in Maryland history – more than \$8 billion since 2007; preserved more than \$1 billion in cash reserves between the fund balance and the Rainy Day Fund – larger than 41 other states in the nation; and with the FY 2014 budget passed by the legislature, Maryland is now on the verge of nearly eliminating the long-standing \$1.7 billion structural deficit inherited in 2007.



For a full list of bills signed today, [click here](#).

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Governor O'Malley Announces Winners of State's Inaugural InvestMaryland Challenge

April 15th, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Joined tonight by hundreds of entrepreneurs at the Maryland Institute College of Art, Governor Martin O'Malley awarded \$100,000 each to three Maryland companies in the State's inaugural [InvestMaryland Challenge](#), a national business competition which offered cash and in-kind awards as well as opportunities for startups to showcase themselves to potential investors.

The winner in the Life Sciences category is [Graybug](#), a Baltimore-based company that is developing drug delivery technologies for the treatment of neovascular diseases, including age-related macular degeneration. Topping the IT (hardware/software) category is [RedOwl Analytics](#), a Baltimore-based company recognized for its Reveal Software, which examines corporate communications and transactional data in real-time to help reduce risk and provide organizational assessments for executives, analysts and other monitors. The General Industry category winner is [i-Lighting](#) of Northeast, which sells an expansive line of cost-effective, easy-to-install, energy-efficient LED lighting kits for indoor and outdoor living spaces. The three winners also received two round-trip tickets from Spirit Airlines and legal services from Whiteford Taylor Preston, a Baltimore law firm.

"The InvestMaryland Challenge offers a unique opportunity to celebrate the ground-breaking innovation taking place in our State and connect our entrepreneurs with the resources they need to turn their ideas into the companies and jobs of tomorrow," said Governor O'Malley. "I want to congratulate all the participants in our inaugural Challenge and look forward to kicking off next year's competition in the fall."

"The InvestMaryland Challenge illustrated both the potential of Maryland's entrepreneurial community and the need for capital among our young startups," said Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) Secretary Dominick Murray. "Maryland will continue its strong support of entrepreneurs in high-growth sectors like life sciences, cyber security, green technology, aerospace and advanced manufacturing so that we can continue to fuel our Innovation Economy and create jobs for generations to come."

Organized by DBED, the Challenge drew 259 entries from around the country, including 25 out-of-state companies from as far away as California, Georgia and Massachusetts. The field was narrowed over three successive rounds of judging by a panel of 79 investors, successful entrepreneurs, business executives and other members of the Maryland startup community.

Also awarded during the Finale event were more than \$125,000 in in-kind and smaller cash awards contributed by business incubators, legal firms, entrepreneur advisors and others who work with startups. Special awards included a \$50,000 software package from Microsoft BizSpark; \$25,000 in research and development services from Noble Life Sciences; a \$5,000 University of Maryland Ventures prize for the best University of Maryland-affiliated entrant; a \$5,000 prize from the Maryland Biotechnology Center to a life sciences entrant to attend either BIO International 2014 in San Diego or MEDICA, the world's largest event for the medical

sector in Dusseldorf, Germany; \$5,000 to encourage entrepreneurship in rural areas from the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center; and \$5,000 plus meetings with potential investors from New Markets Venture Partners for the company with the best education technology innovation. Incubator space was also awarded from the Emerging Technology Center in Baltimore, the Maryland Center for Entrepreneurship, Bethesda Green and TowsonGlobal. The Chesapeake Innovation Center awarded an opportunity to present during their TechBridge Showcase. Click [here](#) for the full list of winners.

In addition to fueling entrepreneurship, the Challenge will help build a pipeline of innovative companies for the State's InvestMaryland program, the largest venture capital investment initiative in Maryland's history. Created by Governor O'Malley and passed by Maryland's General Assembly in 2011, the program is being run through the Maryland Venture Fund and DBED. Last year, the State raised \$84 million for the program through an online auction of tax credits to Maryland insurance companies.

Two-thirds of the funding – \$56 million – is being managed by carefully screened private venture firms that will invest the funds and, if successful, return 100% of the principal and 80% of the profits to the State's general fund. To date, InvestMaryland has invested \$25 million in three local venture firms – Grotech Ventures will invest \$12 million; New Atlantic Ventures, \$8 million; and Kinetic Ventures, \$5 million. The remaining third is being invested by the Maryland Venture Fund directly in innovative companies. To date, the Fund has invested in companies that include e-commerce, biotechnology, online education, social media and IT/communications.

ABOUT DBED: The Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development stimulates private investment and creates jobs by attracting new businesses, encouraging the expansion and retention of existing companies, and providing workforce training and financial assistance to Maryland companies. The Department promotes the State's many economic advantages and markets local products and services at home and abroad to spur economic development and international investment, trade and tourism. Because they are major economic generators, the Department also supports the Arts, film production, sports and other special events. For more information, visit www.ChooseMaryland.org.

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Business Leaders, Educators, and Civic Leaders to Join Governor O'Malley on Mission to Israel and Jordan

April 17th, 2013

Mission to strengthen trade, investment ties with Israel; explore new opportunities between Maryland/Jordan

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley will be joined by more than 30 business, civic and higher education leaders on an eight-day trade mission to Israel and Jordan, departing on Saturday, April 20. The mission marks the Governor's third to Israel, having traveled there as Baltimore's Mayor and also in 2008, but his first visit to Jordan, where he will address Jordanian businesses and government leaders at a dinner reception. The delegation will arrive in Jerusalem on Sunday, April 21, and will travel first to Amman, Jordan, then return back to Israel for the remainder of the mission. While in Israel, the Governor will meet with Israeli President Shimon Peres and other government officials, as well as a number of Israeli businesses in both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. For the Governor's public itinerary, click [here](#).

"As our economy strengthens, we know we must look beyond our borders for new avenues for trade and investment, particularly those countries – like Israel – that have invested heavily in supporting entrepreneurs and growing an Innovation Economy," said Governor O'Malley. "I look forward to traveling with this impressive group of educators, business and civic leaders as we work together to grow and expand our already-strong trade and investment ties with Israel and open new doors with Jordan's business community."

Among the local business, civic and higher education leaders on the mission will be Dr. Wallace Loh, President of the University of Maryland, College Park; Dr. Jay Perman, President of the University of Maryland, Baltimore; Dr. Arthur Abramson, Executive Director of the Baltimore Jewish Council; Delegate Sandy Rosenberg; and Rob Rosenbaum, President of the Maryland Technology Development Corp. (TEDCO). In addition, the delegation will include Maryland's Secretary of State John McDonough, Secretary of Business and Economic Development Dominick Murray, Maryland Port Administration Executive Director James White and Director of Governor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs Izzy Patoka. The mission is being coordinated by Barry Bogage, Executive Director of the Maryland/Israel Development Center.

"As Maryland's flagship, research university, we are poised to extend our existing ties with Israel's premier academic institutions, which are innovative-entrepreneurial powerhouses," said University of Maryland President Wallace D. Loh. "Also, we anticipate building new bridges in Jordan. I am honored to join Governor O'Malley, and we intend to make the most of this extraordinary opportunity."

"I am extremely excited to have the opportunity to be part of Maryland's trade mission to Israel and Jordan," said Devinder Poonian, CEO of DP Clinical in Rockville. "Over the years, we have managed clinical trials in the U.S. for Israeli companies and have developed strong

partnerships. Israel has many pharmaceutical, biotech and device companies and my goal for this mission is to further strengthen our existing relationships and develop new business partnerships.”

“Israel and Maryland share common strengths in science and technology,” said Barry Bogage, Executive Director of the Maryland/Israel Development Center. “We look forward to leveraging these strengths into more successes like ELTA’s recent decision to set up their North American headquarters in the Maryland, bringing 100 high-tech jobs to the state.”

During the mission, Governor O’Malley will promote Maryland as an ideal location for Israeli businesses looking to have a U.S. presence, particularly those in life sciences, cyber security, information technology, aerospace and defense – industries that are strong for both Maryland and Israel. The Governor will address Israeli businesses during a dinner reception at U.S. Ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro’s residence and is scheduled to meet with executives of ELTA Systems, the Israeli aerospace company that recently opened a U.S office in Howard County with plans to create 100 new high-tech jobs. The Governor is also scheduled to visit the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

In addition, Governor O’Malley will meet with high-ranking Israeli government leaders, including members of the new Bayit Hayehudi and Yesh Atid parties. Delegation members will accompany the Governor at many of the official receptions, but will spend the majority of their time meeting one-one-one with potential business and educational partners.

Maryland has long maintained ties with Israel, building on shared strengths in biotechnology, IT, aerospace and defense. Currently about 20 Israeli companies maintain offices in Maryland, including Teva BioPharmaceuticals, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems Ltd. and IMI Services (a subsidiary of Israel Military Industries). In 2012, Israel was Maryland’s 43rd largest trading partner with \$51.1 million in product exports, mostly chemicals, transportation equipment, and computer and electronic products.

The O’Malley-Brown Administration has taken significant steps to ramp up the State’s international outreach. In 2011, the Governor led two historic economic development missions – one to China, South Korea and Vietnam and one to India – that netted a combined \$145 million in trade and investment deals for the State and the companies that were part of the delegation. As a result, several delegations from those countries have visited Maryland in recent months, which have resulted in additional partnerships and deals for Maryland companies.

The State has also opened a number of foreign trade offices in targeted countries, including Maryland’s first Africa trade office, which opened in August 2012. In addition to Israel and Africa, the State has foreign offices in China (Shanghai), Colombia, France (Paris), India, Russia, South Korea (Seoul), Taiwan (Taipei), Vietnam (Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City) and the Western Balkans (Montenegro). With the exception of the offices in China and Israel, all the State’s foreign offices operate on a contingency basis with no up-front cost to taxpayers.

Maryland’s Office of International Investment and Trade works to stimulate foreign direct investment in the State, offers export assistance for small and mid-sized Maryland companies and coordinates international trade and investment missions and trade show opportunities for Maryland companies. For more information on resources available to business that want to market their products or services globally, visit www.choosemaryland.org

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First Lady Michelle Obama Joins Governor O'Malley for Veterans Full Employment Act Bill Signing

April 17th, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley, Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr, House Speaker Michael E. Busch, joined by First Lady Michelle Obama and Lieutenant Governor Anthony G. Brown, today signed the Veterans Full Employment Act of 2013 into law.

"There is no progress without jobs," **said Governor O'Malley**. "Throughout our country, there is a dichotomy between the fact that too many of our fellow citizens are still without work, while at the same time too many of our businesses cannot find workers who possess the requisite skills. Together with our leaders in the General Assembly, we passed the Veterans Full Employment Act because all too often, veterans face barriers by their state's own bureaucracy, for themselves or for their spouses. With the support of First Lady Obama and Dr. Biden, we are making sure our veterans receive the jobs they need and the full credit they deserve for their military training, education, and experience from licensing boards, and from our colleges and universities."

First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden have set a goal that by the end of 2015, all 50 states will have taken legislative or executive action to help the nation's troops get the credentials they need to successfully transition to the civilian labor market.

"Since last year, when I first spoke to our nation's governors about the issues facing military spouses, the number of states that have passed laws to help these spouses has more than tripled – from 11 to 36," **said First Lady Michelle Obama**. "Since we spoke with the governors again at the end of February, 13 states, including Maryland, have acted to help our veterans earn credentials...I want to say a huge thank you to Governor O'Malley for his leadership on this effort and to all of the legislators who made our military families a priority."

"Streamlining our bureaucratic licensure and certification process to recognize the experience and talent of our veterans and their families is the very least we can do for these incredible men and women," **said Senate President Miller**. "It is a win-win that honors their service and brings tremendous economic benefit to our State."

"Our veterans are some of Maryland's greatest leaders," **said House Speaker Busch**. "They have received the finest training and life experiences anywhere and, with this legislation, we can better harness their skills and energy to work for our State. I am proud to stand with Governor O'Malley, President Miller and First Lady Obama today to sign this legislation in support of our veterans."

[The O'Malley-Brown Administration recently set a new goal to reach full employment for Maryland veterans by the end of 2015.](#) The Veterans Full Employment Act removes certain barriers to employment that service members often face when making the transition from military service to the civilian workforce. The bill also expedites the occupational and professional licensing process for military spouses when a military family moves to Maryland.

"When our veterans return from combat and other deployments to enter the job market, they should be able to fully utilize the skills they've acquired to find a good paying job," **said Lt. Governor Brown, the nation's highest-ranking elected official to have served a tour of duty in Iraq.** "Our veterans and military families have earned our respect and our full support, that's why I was privileged to lead the O'Malley-Brown Administration's effort to pass the Veterans Full Employment Act. We still have a lot of work to do to help veterans transition back into the community, but this legislation is a major step forward."

The Veterans Full Employment Act of 2013, which the Administration developed in consultation with DOD, addresses these key issues:

- ensuring that veterans who apply for occupational and professional licenses in Maryland get credit for their military training, education, and experience;
- requiring Maryland's public institutions of higher education to develop and implement policies for awarding academic credit for relevant military training and education; and
- establishing expedited licensing procedures for military spouses, service members, and recently-discharged veterans who relocate to Maryland.

The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) established its USA4 Military Families initiative to engage state policymakers on issues concerning the quality of life of military members and their families. Through this initiative, DOD has identified 10 "key issues" most important to the welfare of veterans, servicemembers, and military families, including the development and adoption of state policies that facilitate the process by which servicemembers and veterans receive licensure credit and academic credit for relevant military education, training, and experience and to lessen the financial burden on military families that relocate to another state by removing state licensure impediments facing military spouses.

Watch the bill signing [here](#).

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Statement from Governor Martin O'Malley on Preliminary March Jobs Report

April 19th, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD - Governor Martin O'Malley today issued the following statement on the U.S. Department of Labor's release of preliminary employment data for the month of March:

"Last month, Maryland's dynamic private sector continued to drive our job growth, creating 5,100 jobs and bringing the number of private sector jobs in our state to its highest level in nearly five years. Maryland has now recovered 97 percent of the jobs lost during the Bush recession and our unemployment rate, while still too high, is 13 percent lower than the national rate.

"There is no progress without a job. Together with the members of the General Assembly, we had a very productive legislative session where we passed meaningful legislation focused on creating jobs and expanding opportunity. We remain focused on strengthening and growing our businesses, and fueling the job-creating potential of Maryland's world-class innovation economy."

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Governor O'Malley, Israeli Leaders Announce First Maryland/Israel Advisory Board

April 21st, 2013

Board will develop business opportunities that will jointly benefit both communities

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Joined by more than 30 Maryland business, civic and higher education leaders, Governor Martin O'Malley today arrived in Israel to kick off a weeklong economic development mission that also includes a visit to the neighboring country of Jordan. During a welcome reception, the Governor, along with Member of Israel's Knesset Rabbi Dov Lipman, announced the first Maryland/Israel Advisory Board, which will be comprised of some of Maryland and Israel's leading business, scientific and civic leaders. Governor O'Malley and Rabbi Lipman will serve as honorary co-chairs of the Board, which is charged with developing business opportunities that will jointly benefit both communities, and also helping to connect Maryland and Israeli business and community leaders for potential partnerships. For a list of board members, click [here](#).

"While Maryland and Israel have a long history of partnership, the Maryland/Israel Advisory Board will be a dedicated group looking to open new doors for Maryland and Israeli businesses and community organizations looking to collaborate," said Governor O'Malley. "I look forward to working with Rabbi Lipman and the members of this board to strengthen our shared ties in industries like biotechnology, IT and aerospace and defense and encourage trade and cultural missions to both of our communities."

"I thank the Governor for choosing me for this honor," said Member of Knesset Rabbi Dov Lipman, who is also a former Marylander. "Maryland is a huge part of who I am today and I am thrilled that we will be working together to forge a close bond between my home State where I was raised and my new home, in which I am a member of Parliament."

During the reception, Governor O'Malley also announced that LifeBridge Health of Maryland and The Trendlines Group of Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish the Maryland/Israel Medical Device Commercialization Initiative. Through the initiative, LifeBridge Health and Trendlines will work to identify unmet medical needs and collaborate on the discovery, development, testing and ultimately, commercialization of new medical device healthcare solutions. The MOU will be in effect for five years.

"As a Jewish-sponsored hospital, a collaboration between our institution and physicians and our Israeli counterparts simply makes sense," said Neil Meltzer, President and CEO of LifeBridge Health. "Health care reform is driving innovation, and the synergy between a community-based health system that focuses on patient care and a business incubator is sure to spawn not only the most inspired, but also the most practical and timely healthcare inventions to better serve the intended beneficiaries: our patients and their families."

The mission marks the Governor's third to Israel, having traveled there as Baltimore's Mayor and also in 2008, but his first visit to Jordan. Tomorrow, Monday April 22, he will address

Jordanian businesses and government leaders at a dinner reception. The Governor and delegation will then return to Jerusalem, where the Governor will meet on Wednesday with Israeli President Shimon Peres. For the Governor's public itinerary, click [here](#).

Throughout the mission, Governor O'Malley will promote Maryland as an ideal location for both Israeli and Jordanian businesses looking to have a U.S. presence, particularly those in life sciences, cyber security, information technology, aerospace and defense. The Governor will address Israeli businesses during a dinner reception at U.S. Ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro's residence and is scheduled to meet with executives of ELTA Systems, the Israeli aerospace company that recently opened a U.S office in Howard County with plans to create 100 new high-tech jobs. The Governor is also scheduled to visit the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

In addition, Governor O'Malley will meet with high-ranking Israeli government leaders, including members of Israel's new Bayit Hayehudi and Yesh Atid parties. Delegation members will accompany the Governor at many of the official receptions, but will spend the majority of their time meeting one-one-one with potential business and educational partners.

Maryland has long maintained ties with Israel, building on shared strengths in biotechnology, IT, aerospace and defense. Currently about 20 Israeli companies maintain offices in Maryland, including Teva BioPharmaceuticals, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems Ltd. and IMI Services (a subsidiary of Israel Military Industries). In 2012, Israel was Maryland's 43rd largest trading partner with \$51.1 million in product exports, mostly chemicals, transportation equipment, and computer and electronic products.

The O'Malley-Brown Administration has taken significant steps to ramp up the State's international outreach. In 2011, the Governor led two historic economic development missions – one to China, South Korea and Vietnam and one to India – that netted a combined \$145 million in trade and investment deals for the State and the companies that were part of the delegation. As a result, several delegations from those countries have visited Maryland in recent months, which have resulted in additional partnerships and deals for Maryland companies.

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Governor O'Malley Meets with Regent, Addresses Business Leaders in Visit to Jordan

April 22nd, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD – As part of a weeklong economic development mission to Israel and Jordan, Governor Martin O'Malley today traveled to Amman, Jordan to meet with the Regent, HRH Prince Faisal bin Al-Hussein. The mission marks the Governor's first to Jordan, where he hopes to open new avenues for trade and investment. Following the meeting, the Governor toured Amman – Jordan's capital and largest city – then met with the U.S. Charge d'Affaires in Jordan Stephanie Williams, who hosted a reception where the Governor addressed Jordanian business leaders.

"We see great potential to strengthen our export relationship with Jordan, and also promote Maryland as the gateway to U.S. markets for Jordanian businesses," said Governor O'Malley. "It was an honor to meet with the Regent, who, along with King Abdullah II, understands the importance of reaching across borders to explore new trade and investment opportunities that will benefit not just Maryland and Jordan, but the global economy."

"We welcome the visit of Governor O'Malley and his delegation from the state of Maryland," said U.S. Charge d'Affaires in Jordan Stephanie Williams. "We look forward to exploring the opportunities presented by this visit to identify future business and academic ties between the United States and Jordan."

During the reception, Governor O'Malley joined University of Maryland (UMD) President Wallace D. Loh in announcing that the university today signed an historic agreement with the University of Jordan. The agreement establishes UMD's first formal reciprocal student exchange program with Jordan's oldest and largest university, and is among College Park's first such accords in the Middle East.

"Opening doors and establishing connections with outstanding academic partners like the University of Jordan quickly benefit our educational and research efforts," said President Loh. "Student exchanges pack indelible lessons into a few months, and presage even deeper collaborations. Throughout this trip we are discovering how our maturing international networks increase our impact and effectiveness for the State of Maryland."

Maryland is continuing to grow its business and economic relationship with Jordan. While Maryland is the second largest U.S. import market by volume for Jordan, Jordan is 63rd largest export market for Maryland. In 2012, Maryland exports to Jordan totaled \$17 million, with vehicles, used or second hand merchandise and machinery and chemicals as the top exports.

In addition to being a large import market for Jordan, Maryland is also home to the Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs, which Governor O'Malley created in 2007 to effectively address the concerns of the Middle Eastern American community. Maryland also has the Middle East American Chamber of Commerce (MACC), which helps to bring together entrepreneurs and professionals from the Middle East. Their objectives are to create jobs in

Maryland, advocate for small businesses in Maryland, improve the relationship between Maryland and Middle-East countries, maintain communication about opportunities and legislation on a regular basis, and create opportunities to empower Middle East American businesses and professionals.

The O'Malley-Brown Administration has taken significant steps to ramp up the State's international outreach. In 2011, the Governor led two historic economic development missions – one to China, South Korea and Vietnam and one to India – that netted a combined \$145 million in trade and investment deals for the State and the companies that were part of the delegation. Subsequently, several delegations from those countries have visited Maryland in recent months, resulting in additional partnerships and deals for Maryland companies.

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Governor O'Malley Announces Four High-Tech Israeli Companies to Open Offices in Maryland

April 23rd, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD – During an eight-day economic development mission to Israel and Jordan, Governor Martin O'Malley today announced that four high-tech Israeli companies will be opening offices in Maryland, capping a day of meetings with Jordanian entrepreneurs and medical and government officials in Israel. The companies, [Shekel Scales](#), [Askimo](#), [Roboteam](#) and [Hybrid Security](#), range from a global provider of electronic scales and weighing systems to a start-up engaged in developing web fraud detection solutions. For the Governor's public itinerary, click [here](#).

"These companies are great additions to our high-tech entrepreneurial community and it is a testament to our highly-educated workforce and strategic location that they are choosing Maryland to grow," said Governor O'Malley. "Israel and Maryland share a commitment to education and innovation, and to making this world a safer place. These companies exemplify those commitments and the strength of the bond between Maryland and Israel."

Shekel Scales, which builds precision scales for the retail and healthcare industry, opened its office in Owings Mills earlier this year. The company already counts GE Healthcare, IBM and Fujitsu among its customers and plans to hire 30 people in Maryland.

"We're glad to be here. This is a great opportunity for Shekel Scales to innovate new products and introduce them to the U.S. market," said Shekel Scales Chairman Yoram Ben-Porat. "Our new and existing customers appreciate that we have a local presence."

Askimo, an online education startup, will open a Montgomery County office with four employees by the end of the summer. The company is currently headquartered in Tel Aviv.

"Our intention is to establish the company's global headquarters in the U.S. and to be close to the world's capital of communications, Washington D.C.," said Askimo CEO David Butnaro.

"We found Maryland very suitable for our needs and goals — the geographic location, the marketing and business opportunities there, and especially the connections and help we are getting through the Maryland/Israel Development Center. I'm looking forward to opening Askimo's office in Maryland and am sure success, creativity and innovation will evolve there."

Roboteam's new Maryland office will support its development of robots that collect tactical intelligence, dispose of explosives, conduct search and rescue operations and survey hazardous material spills.

"The R&D we are doing in Israel is fascinating and exciting, but the real challenge starts when the systems hit the ground," said Shahar Abuhazira, CEO of Roboteam North America.

"Maryland is the best location for our Training and Customer Support Center. We will benefit from the high-quality personnel there and by being so close to the key organizations we are working with."

Hybrid Security, developer of artificially intelligent cybersecurity solutions, will establish a Maryland office within six months.

"We chose Maryland for our U.S headquarters because we see it becoming a leader in the cyber industry," said Hybrid Security CEO Raviv Raz. "Hybrid Security is a technological leader and Maryland was also the first state to reach out and offer its generous support. I believe it is the right time and the right place in light of emerging cyber threats against the American economy and national security."

Also today, Governor O'Malley visited Hadassah Medical Center in the ancient Ein Kerem district of Jerusalem. There, Dr. Jay Perman, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and Menahem Ben-Sasson, president of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, signed an agreement that will launch collaborative studies of trauma care and emergency medicine and increase exchanges of students, faculty and researchers. Governor O'Malley also met Brig. Gen. Dr. Yitshak Kreiss, Surgeon General of the Israel Defense Forces, whose office will participate in the collaboration.

Governor O'Malley also met with Naftali Bennett, Israel's Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor and leader of the new Bayit Hayehudi Party. Governor O'Malley and Minister Bennett discussed a range of international political and economic events, the economies of Israel and Maryland, and efforts to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in both. Earlier today, in Jordan's capital of Amman, Governor O'Malley addressed a meeting of Intaj, an association representing that country's software and IT industry.

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Governor O'Malley Meets with Israeli President Shimon Peres, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

April 24th, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Today, midway through an eight-day economic development mission to Israel and Jordan, Governor Martin O'Malley met with Israeli President Shimon Peres at the president's residence in Jerusalem. During the hour-long meeting, the discussion focused on Maryland and the State's economy, entrepreneurship and the Middle East peace process. Later in the day, Governor O'Malley met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to discuss U.S.-Israeli relations, as well as the economic ties between Israel and Maryland, which both have strong clusters in defense, cybersecurity, healthcare and biotechnology.

"Meeting with President Peres and Prime Minister Netanyahu was a tremendous honor," said Governor O'Malley. "Their tireless dedication to peace for Israel and the entire region is an inspiration not just for the citizens here, but the world over. We look forward to strengthening the deep and historic relationship between Maryland and Israel and growing as partners in peace and prosperity."

The first person to serve terms as both Prime Minister and President of Israel, President Peres began his career in 1947, serving in the Haganah, the predecessor to the Israel Defense Force. In 1953, at the age of 29, Peres was appointed Director General of the Defense Ministry and, over six years, established Israel's electronic aircraft industries and the country's nuclear program. Peres was elected to Israel's legislature, the Knesset, at age 36 and, over the next 50 years, twice served as Prime Minister and once as Acting Prime Minister. In 1994, he won the Nobel Peace Prize with Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat.

Prime Minister Netanyahu, who has twice held the office of prime minister, worked as a business consultant to Israeli high-tech companies after leaving office in 1999 and before returning to politics in 2002. He is the first Israeli prime minister born in Israel after the establishment of the state. He is also an author and a leading voice on combating global terrorism. Governor O'Malley met Netanyahu during a previous trade mission to Israel in 2008.

Also today, Governor O'Malley met with Major General Amos Gilad, one of the top officials of Israel's Ministry of Defense who is Director of Policy and Political-Military Affairs and Chairman of Security Relations with Regional and Strategic Partners. Governor O'Malley and General Gilad discussed the military, intelligence and security assets in Maryland and the major defense and foreign policy issues facing Israel.

Governor O'Malley also traveled to Ashdod to tour the headquarters of ELTA Systems Ltd., the world's 4th-largest radar company. A subsidiary of Israeli Aerospace Industries Ltd., ELTA developed the radar used in the Iron Dome missile defense system that was instrumental in protecting Israeli towns and cities in the Gaza Strip during the conflict with Hamas in the fall. Governor O'Malley discussed with ELTA executives the company's plans for expansion in the U.S. market and the recent success of the Iron Dome system. ELTA North America opened its

U.S. headquarters in Howard County last summer with plans to hire 100 employees.

"We are honored and excited in Maryland to be the U.S. home of ELTA," Governor O'Malley said. "Israel and Maryland share a belief in innovating, educating, and make the right choices and smart investments that lead to a safer world. We look forward to ELTA's growth in Maryland and further collaborating with Israeli companies in life sciences, cyber and homeland security, and aerospace and defense."

"It is an honor and privilege to have the opportunity to host the honorable Governor O'Malley at ELTA Systems Ltd.," said Nissim Hadas, IAI Executive Vice President and ELTA President.

"ELTA North America will serve as the first line of our U.S. customer support. With the technical and manufacturing expertise of our combat tested and operationally fielded systems, we plan to create jobs and grow our market share in the challenging and dynamic U.S. market. I look forward to seeing ELTA North America mature into a successful business that brings pride to the State of Maryland."

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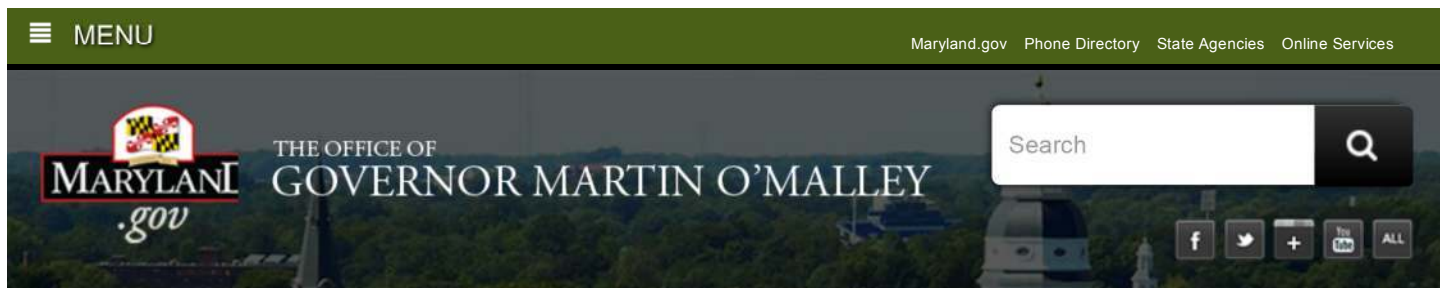
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Governor O'Malley Announces Maryland/Israel Development Partnership, Meets with Palestinian Prime Minister Fayyad

April 28th, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Wrapping up an eight-day trade mission to Israel and Jordan, Governor Martin O'Malley today announced the launch of the Maryland/Israel Development Partnership to fund joint development efforts by Maryland and Israeli companies working in the cybersecurity and life sciences sectors. Governor O'Malley and Israel Chief Scientist Avi Hasson discussed the partnership, as well as entrepreneurship and economic development in Maryland and Israel, during a conference call today in Jerusalem.

"Innovation is not a solo act. History has shown that we can speed our path to discovery through collaboration and partnership," said Governor O'Malley. "I am pleased to announce the creation of the Maryland/Israel Development Partnership and look forward to what we will achieve when we bring together the bright minds and talented entrepreneurs in Maryland and Israel to tackle the great challenges facing our planet."

"This alliance represents a commitment to ensure the long-term success of our economy by exploring the common interests and growth opportunities of innovation internationally," said Chief Scientist Hasson. "It provides an important platform to strengthen the ties between Maryland and Israel, two regions rich in life science and cyber security knowledge, and we look forward to the visionary products and technologies that will result."

Maryland's Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) and the Office of the Chief Scientist in the Israeli Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor will decide together which research partnerships to fund. Through the Maryland Venture Fund, DBED will fund up to half of the Maryland company's research costs in the form of convertible debt or equity, with a cap of \$400,000 per project. Beyond that investment, the company could also be eligible for Maryland's Biotechnology Investment Incentive Tax Credit, which was recently increased to \$10 million per year, or the Cybersecurity Investment Incentive Tax Credit, which was created by Governor O'Malley and the General Assembly in the legislative session that concluded this month. Initial application forms are due July 31 and the partnership will begin accepting them immediately. Awards will be announced in January 2014.

Governor O'Malley also met Sunday with Salam Fayyad, Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority. For about an hour in the Mukataa, the Authority's headquarters in Ramallah, Governor O'Malley and Fayyad discussed Middle Eastern issues and relations between Israel and Palestine. A U.S.-educated economist with a Ph.D. from the University of Texas, Austin, Fayyad announced his resignation in mid-April but was asked by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to stay in the position until a new government can be formed.

Maryland has long maintained ties with Israel, building on shared strengths in biotechnology, IT, aerospace and defense. Currently about 20 Israeli companies maintain offices in Maryland,

including Teva BioPharmaceuticals, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems Ltd. and IMI Services (a subsidiary of Israel Military Industries). In 2012, Israel was Maryland's 43rd largest trading partner with \$51.1 million in product exports, mostly chemicals, transportation equipment, and computer and electronic products.

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Governor O'Malley Announces House of Cards Back in Maryland to Film Season Two

April 29th, 2013

ANNAPOLIS, MD (April 29, 2013) – Governor Martin O'Malley announced that Media Rights Capital started filming today the second season of the Netflix series *House of Cards* in Maryland.

"We are pleased that *House of Cards*, a critically-acclaimed and ground-breaking series has returned to Maryland," said Governor O'Malley. "Season One had an economic impact of more than \$140 million and provided jobs for more than 2,200 Marylanders. Together with our leaders in the General Assembly, we've expanded the Film Production Tax Credit, and as we welcome the cast and crew back, we also look forward to more job creation and economic opportunity to come."

House of Cards stars Kevin Spacey (*Casino Jack*, *American Beauty*, *Seven*) and was developed by Beau Willimon (*The Ides of March*). David Fincher, Joshua Donen (*Spartacus: Blood and Sand*), Academy Award®-winner Eric Roth (*Forrest Gump*, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*), Kevin Spacey and Dana Brunetti of Trigger Street Productions (*The Social Network*, *21*), Willimon, David Manson (*Saved*, *New Amsterdam*), Emmy Award-winner Andrew Davies, and Michael Dobbs, who produced the original BBC series, are Executive Producers for *House of Cards*.

In addition to Spacey, the series stars Robin Wright (*The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo*, *Forrest Gump*), Kate Mara (*American Horror Story*), Michael Kelly ("Person of Interest"), Kristen Connolly (*The Cabin in the Woods*), Sakina Jaffrey (*The Domino Effect*) and Constance Zimmer ("Entourage").

"We're grateful to Governor O'Malley and the State Legislature for encouraging film and TV production in Maryland. The state's vendors, crews, diverse locations and government support make it an ideal place to film. We are proud to call Maryland our home and to participate in its vibrant economy," said Willimon, the series' developer.

The passage of legislation to enhance and extend the Film Production Activity Tax Credit in the recently completed session of the General Assembly secured the second season of *House of Cards* for Maryland.

The announcement of the start of production on *House of Cards* second season comes soon after the premiere of the second season of the award-winning HBO series *VEEP*, which was also filmed in Maryland. Season one of *VEEP* hired 978 Marylanders and did business with more than 1,100 Maryland vendors.

The Maryland Film Office, located in Baltimore and part of the Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts, is an agency of the state's Department of Business and Economic Development. It provides location scouting and pre-production research, in addition to acting as a government and community liaison throughout film production. For more information,

visit www.MarylandFilm.org

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